

## BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF EDINBURGH.

April 9, 1846.—Prof. Balfour, President, in the Chair.

Donations to the library and museum were announced; particularly one from Mr. William Gardiner, jun., Dundee, of his elegant little work on the Mosses, intended as an introduction to the study of that interesting tribe of plants. It seems well-fitted to accomplish the object in view.

The following communications were read:—

1. "Botanical Excursions in Upper Styria in 1842," by Dr. R. C. Alexander.

In this paper Dr. Alexander gave an account of various excursions to the mountainous parts of Styria, during which he visited the Schökel, Lantsch, Leoben, Reiting, Yolling, Klagenfurt, and Saltzbach; also of the various plants observed during his tour. He collected in all about 900 species, of which upwards of twenty were new to the flora of Styria. The paper was accompanied by a list of the principal plants collected south of the Drave. Specimens from the Society's herbarium, contributed by Dr. Alexander, were produced to illustrate the paper, of which an abstract will appear in these 'Annals' and in the Society's 'Transactions.'

2. "Remarks on the Claims of certain Species of Plants to be considered indigenous to Britain," by Mr. R. M. Stark.

Mr. Stark adverted to the progress of Botanical Geography, and particularly to the labours of Mr. Hewett C. Watson. Passing over the instances of shrubs and perennial herbaceous plants found apparently wild, but which have undoubtedly escaped from the garden, he directed attention to the large family of annual corn-weeds. Though universally dispersed wherever the plough and the agency of man extended, the fact of their not being found associated with other annuals where the land was waste and uncultivated, seemed to prove that they were the companions of the cereal grains, and with them had been introduced at a very remote period. Some of them are confined to one side of the island, or to certain districts, which showed that, notwithstanding their probable exotic origin, they were more or less subject to the laws regulating the distribution of organic life. He expressed the opinion that it would be desirable, both for the interests of science and agriculture, that these plants, and their prevalence or rarity in various districts, should be recorded in our catalogues, local floras, and other works of a similar description.

Mr. James M'Nab exhibited flowering plants of two species of *Arum* (*A. cordatum* and *A. cornutum*), raised in the garden of the Horticultural Society, from seeds sent by William Jameson, Esq., from Saharunpore, in April 1843. The flowering spathe of one was two feet, and of the other eighteen inches in length, both being beautifully mottled with brown and yellow spots.